

SUBJ: FY00 POLICY MESSAGE 50 - CLARIFICATION OF SAF/FMBM POLICY  
REGARDING SERVING MATERIALS FOR PROTOCOL OFFICES

REF: SAF/FMBM MSG, 031830Z APR 00, SUBJ: SERVING MATERIALS FOR PROTOCOL  
OFFICES (RETRANSMITTED ON AMCFSS/FMBC POLICY MSG #46, 101353Z APR 00)  
1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MSG IS TO PROVIDE CLARIFICATION TO REF MSG,  
DUE TO THE NUMEROUS INQUIRIES RECEIVED FROM THE FIELD. THE SAF/FMBM  
MSG COVERS TWO SEPARATE, BUT RELATED ISSUES, BROKEN DOWN AS FOLLOWS.

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2. THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE MSG WAS TO ANNOUNCE A CHANGE TO AIR  
FORCE POLICY, ALLOWING THE USE OF APPROPRIATED FUNDS (APF) TO  
PURCHASE LIGHT REFRESHMENTS (AS DEFINED IN THE MSG) FOR CONFERENCES.  
RECENT CHANGES TO THE JOINT FEDERAL TRAVEL REGULATION (JFTR) ARE DRIVING  
CHANGES TO AFI 65-601, VOLUME 1, CHAP 4, PARA 4.42.2.2.  
PREVIOUSLY, WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, APF COULD NOT BE USED TO PURCHASE  
FOOD ITEMS. THIS PROHIBITION ALSO INCLUDED FOOD SERVING AND  
PREPARATION ITEMS AS WELL. **UNDER THE NEW GUIDANCE, ANY ORGANIZATION  
SPONSORING A CONFERENCE MAY USE THEIR APF (NOT A MANDATED  
REQUIREMENT) TO PROVIDE LIGHT REFRESHMENTS DURING BREAKS. THIS  
AUTHORIZATION DOES NOT EXTEND TO ICE BREAKERS, DINNERS, OR ANY OTHER  
SOCIAL ENGAGEMENTS TYPICALLY ASSOCIATED WITH CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE.**  
THESE ARE STILL CONSIDERED TO BE A PERSONAL EXPENSE AND ARE NOT  
SPECIFICALLY REIMBURSED ON THE ATTENDEE'S TRAVEL VOUCHER ABOVE AND  
BEYOND THE NORMAL PER DIEM LIMITATION. DO NOT CLASSIFY MEETINGS,  
TRAINING SESSIONS, OR ANY TYPE OF OFFICIAL GATHERING CONSISTING OF  
PRIMARILY LOCAL PERSONNEL AS A CONFERENCE IN ORDER TO JUSTIFY  
SERVINGS SNACKS AND BEVERAGES PAID FOR WITH APF. TRAVEL REGULATIONS  
DEFINE A CONFERENCE AS A MEETING, RETREAT, SEMINAR, SYMPOSIUM, OR  
EVENT THAT INVOLVES ATTENDEE TRAVEL. IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO

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PROVIDE A SINGLE DEFINITION FOR A CONFERENCE THAT WOULD COVER EVERY  
POSSIBLE SITUATION BUT AS A RULE OF THUMB, A MAJORITY OF THE  
ATTENDEES SHOULD BE IN A TDY STATUS. **IF LIGHT REFRESHMENTS ARE TO BE  
PROVIDED AT A CONFERENCE, THE FUNDING RESPONSIBILITY BELONGS TO THE  
SPONSORING ORGANIZATION AND NOT THE INDIVIDUAL ATTENDEES IN THE FORM  
OF A REGISTRATION FEE.** ADDITIONALLY, THE NEW GUIDANCE ALLOWS THOSE  
ORGANIZATIONS THAT OPERATE A CONFERENCE CENTER (I.E., A FACILITY  
WHOSE PRIMARY PURPOSE IS TO SUPPORT LARGE CONFERENCE GATHERINGS SUCH  
AS THE AMC GLOBAL REACH PLANNING CENTER AT SCOTT AFB) TO PURCHASE THE  
FOOD PREPARATION AND SERVING MATERIALS NEEDED TO SERVE LIGHT  
REFRESHMENTS AT CONFERENCES HELD IN THOSE FACILITIES. FINE CHINA,  
CRYSTAL, SILVERWARE OR SILVER PLATED UTENSILS, LINEN AND LINEN  
LAUNDRY SERVICES ARE NOT AUTHORIZED. **DO NOT** PURCHASE FOOD SERVING AND  
PREPARATION ITEMS (E.G., COFFEE POTS, GLASSWARE, CUPS, PLATES,  
FLATWARE, ETC.) FOR HEADQUARTERS, WING, OR GROUP CONFERENCE ROOMS OR  
ANY OTHER CONFERENCE ROOM WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION AS THEY ARE  
PRIMARILY USED FOR MEETING AND OTHER LOCAL DAY-TO-DAY GATHERINGS  
WHERE LIGHT REFRESHMENTS ARE NOT AN AUTHORIZED APF EXPENSE.

3. THE SECOND PURPOSE OF THE MSG WAS TO PROVIDE CLARIFICATIN ON

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EXISTING GUIDANCE REGARDING THE PURCHASE OF FOOD PREPARATION AND

SERVING MATERIALS IN SUPPORT OF DISTINGUISHED VISITORS. CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, **THERE IS SIMPLY NO AUTHORIZATION TO USE APF TO PURCHASE FOOD PREPARATION AND SERVING MATERIALS FOR A TYPICAL OFFICE, REGARDLESS OF THE POSITION HELD BY THE PERSON OCCUPYING IT, TO INCLUDE WING COMMANDERS AND HQ AMC GENERAL OFFICER POSITIONS OUTSIDE THE AUSPICES OF DODD 1100.12, AUTHORITY FOR ESTABLISHING SPECIAL COMMAND POSITIONS AND 10 U.S.C. SECTION 2387, AND CENTRALLY FUNDED AT BOLLING AFB DC IN ACCORDANCE WITH AFI 65-601, VOL 1, CHAP 21, PARA 21.9.** OVER THE YEARS, PEOPLE HAVE FOUND CREATIVE WAYS TO PROVIDE FOOD PREPARATION AND SERVING ITEMS FOR COMMANDER AND PROTOCOL OFFICES, E.G., USING PERSONAL OR OFFICE ROTARY FUNDS OR BORROWING THESE ITEMS FROM THE OFFICER'S OR ENLISTED CLUBS (NO LONGER AVAILABLE FOR FREE BECAUSE THE CLUBS NOW CHARGE FOR THE SERVICE). THESE TYPES OF SUCCESS STORIES HAVE ONLY SERVED TO PERPETUATE THE FALSE PERCEPTION THAT SOME KIND OF AUTHORITY EXISTS TO PURCHASE FOOD SERVING AND PREPARATION MATERIALS FOR COMMANDERS OR PROTOCOL OFFICES TO USE WHEN THEY HOST DISTINGUISHED VISITORS (DV). LATELY, THIS ISSUE HAS TAKEN NEW DIRECTION BECAUSE THE IMPAC CARD HAS MADE IT EASY TO ASSUME THE AUTHORIZATION EXISTS AND THEN TO PURCHASE THE ITEMS IMPROPERLY WITH

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APF. WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN THE PAST CANNOT BE CHANGED. HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO KEEP EVERYTHING LEGAL AND ABOVE BOARD, AS EXISTING FOOD SERVING AND PREPARATION ITEMS IN COMMANDERS OR PROTOCOL OFFICES NEED TO BE REPLACED OR AUGMENTED, **DO NOT USE APF TO PURCHASE THEM.** WE RECOGNIZE THE LEVEL OF INTEREST AND CONCERN CREATED BY DV SUPPORT WITH REGARD TO THIS ISSUE. HOWEVER, WITHOUT SAF/FMBM APPROVAL, WE MUST COMPLY WITH EXISTING POLICY.